
Introduction

The techniques used for minimally invasive cardiac surgery are evolving so rapidly that it is difficult to keep up with them. In this issue of *Operative Techniques in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery*, we present the most common minimally invasive approaches to the most commonly performed cardiac surgical procedures: coronary artery bypass grafting, mitral valve surgery, and aortic valve surgery. We begin with a description of the various incisions that are used for all types of minimally invasive cardiac surgery by Dr Larry Cohn from Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston, MA. The techniques for performing multivessel coronary artery bypass surgery by two different minimally invasive techniques are then described, one without

cardiopulmonary bypass (Dr Manny Subramanian) and one with cardiopulmonary bypass that uses the endovascular balloon technique (Dr Steve Colvin's group at NYU). A description is then given of the two most popular minimally invasive techniques for performing mitral valve surgery: one uses the endovascular balloon technique (again, the NYU group), and the other uses the Chitwood Clamp by Dr Ranny Chitwood. Finally, the two most popular techniques used for minimally invasive aortic valve surgery are described: the parasternal approach (Dr Cosgrove's group at the Cleveland Clinic) and the ministernotomy approach popularized by Dr Steve Gundry at Loma Linda. We hope that this update of the current surgical techniques for the most commonly performed minimally invasive cardiac surgery will be of benefit to our readers.

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